

Prevention Institute's Resources

The Conversation on Prevention: Health Reform Rapid Response

Health Reform Rapid Response: the conversation on prevention

In the *Los Angeles Times* this week, "[Overweight is the new normal](#)" examines how changes in our environment, such as larger food portion sizes, have transformed our cultural norms surrounding food and physical activity, and our behavior.

It's true: what surrounds us shapes our behavior. This week, we look at shifting the conversation from individual behavior, and back to the role of the environment. Media and dialogue continues to focus on an "individual choice" frame—which also neatly sidesteps the role of industries and others actively working to make half-gallon sodas the new norm.

The Stories

- A Marin Independent Journal letter to the editor, "['Overly Simplistic' Campaign](#)," by a beverage industry spokesman emphasizes individual's choices by claiming that Marin's "[Soda Free Summer](#)" campaign does "nothing to teach people about balance and moderation."
- An ABC Nightline article, "[Candymaker Nestle Invests Billions to Decode Our Digestive Systems](#)," reports on the company's huge investment in

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Tips to Guide your Conversation

Countering the "blame the individual" frame in your letters to the editor, op-eds, and conversations with the media requires that you shift the conversation upstream by describing the social, economic and physical environments that foster or hinder healthy behaviors.

How to Cue the Environment:

[We have pulled these tips from "What Surrounds Us, Shapes Us," a Berkeley Media Studies Group document released through Strategic Alliance. We encourage you to read the entire document, [here](#).]

Paint a picture that describes why healthy communities matter: When neighborhoods don't have clean parks, places to walk, vibrant retail, or healthy food available, everyone's health suffers. By cueing the environment you can shift the discussion to the environment's impact and constraints on individual choice.



What you can do:

- **[Send your congressperson a letter today](#), educating them about **importance of community prevention**: we've made it easy, with tailored emails that you can send directly to your legislators.**
- Join Prevention Institute and sign on to the National Prevention Strategy Support Statement, to demonstrate our support for the concept of having a government-wide approach to prevention. This statement is designed to express that support for having a government-wide approach to prevention. Deadline: close of business, Monday, June 13th. <http://healthyamericans.org/assets/files/nps%20sign%20on%20final.pdf>
- **Make sure we have your zip code**. We want to be able to mobilize people right where you live. [Update your information here](#).

<http://preventioninstitute.org/focus-areas/reforming-our-health-system/projects.html>

Writing and Framing Community Success Stories

Community prevention works: it builds healthier communities, saves money and supports equity. Here are our suggestions for capturing and reflecting the full impact of your community prevention efforts:

- **Keep it local.**
- **Include benefits to the economy.**
- **Use real people and stories.**
- **Connect policy, project and savings.**

[Read full story...](#)

Community Prevention talking points

Data and talking points to guide your conversation on community prevention:

- **Prevention works.**
- **Prevention makes our health care system healthier.**
- **Prevention saves money and lives.**
- **The public wants prevention.**
- **Community prevention is local.**
- **Prevention is good for business.**